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**TRINITY HOSPICE NURSE DEE NECAISE NAMED SOUTH MISSISSIPPI'S NURSE
OF THE YEAR IN FIRST ANNUAL WLOX-TV COMPETITION**

*WLOX-TV and Imperial Palace Casino and Hotel Join to Sponsor
Award Competition Honoring Local Nurses*

BILOXI, Miss. ... August 18, 2005 ... Dee Irby Necaise, LPN, a hospice nurse with Trinity Hospice of Mississippi, was named *South Mississippi Nurse of the Year* in the first annual competition, sponsored by WLOX-TV (ABC) and Imperial Palace Casino and Hotel.

Necaise received the award live on the air during *WLOX's Four O'Clock Show* on Wednesday, August 17, 2005. She was unaware of her nomination or the competition and was completely surprised. Necaise was nominated by her supervisor, Sarah McDaniel, RN, who serves as director of clinical services at Trinity Hospice of Biloxi. Anchors Rebecca Powers and Jeff Lawson presented the award.

WLOX announced the competition July 1, 2005 and has received 189 nominations spanning 13 counties throughout the Southern Mississippi area. The submissions represented nurses across many medical disciplines such as hospitals, hospice, schools and healthcare facilities, among others.

Necaise was chosen because of her caring spirit, unrelenting determination and ability to triumph over adversity. Necaise was born with cerebral palsy and at the time, doctors were uncertain as to whether or not she would survive. She battled several surgeries, rigorous therapy and a variety of braces. At age 21, she finally was able to walk unassisted. After earning a nursing degree from Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College in 1998, Necaise began her career in obstetrics and gynecology as a nurse at a large, local physician's office in Gulfport, Miss. She joined Trinity Hospice in January 2005. Since that time, she has consistently demonstrated a clear commitment to patient care, sincere compassion for the patients and an unrivaled dedication to her work.

"I nominated Dee for this prestigious award because I feel she represents the epitome of nursing. She carefully listens to patients, shares their emotions and strives to meets their every need," said McDaniel.

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Trinity Hospice – Ocean Springs
Nurse of the Year Award

“We chose to secretly submit this nomination on behalf of Dee because we believed she was extremely worthy of this prestigious honor. We are pleased that WLOX, its generous sponsors and prominent judges agreed. We are very proud of Dee’s devotion to hospice care and her commitment to Trinity and its patients. We wish to thank these sponsors for recognizing the important role nurses play in our community and for providing a venue in which their hard work can be acknowledged and appreciated,” McDaniel concluded.

“In the nine months since Dee joined Trinity, she has demonstrated stellar clinical capabilities, a personal warmth, a tremendous sense of compassion and an unwavering dedication. Each day she brings her hospice heart – one that never ceases to provide tender, loving support and quality medical care to those facing difficult end-of-life moments – to her position and to all with whom she interacts. She is an asset to our Biloxi branch and to the patients she serves each and every day. Dee is very deserving of this special honor, and all of us at Trinity congratulate her on winning this esteemed award,” added Sandi Petersen, MSN, RN, CLNC, chief nursing officer at Trinity.

As *South Mississippi’s Nurse of the Year* winner, Necaise will receive an honorary trophy award, compliments of WLOX and Imperial Palace along with an overnight stay in a penthouse at Imperial Palace, dinner for two at their four-star restaurant, the Crown Room. She will also receive dinner for two at Toucan’s Mexican Restaurant; four tickets to Six Flags-New Orleans; four tickets to the Lynn Meadows Discovery Center in Gulfport; two tickets to the October performance of Neil Diamond; four passes to the Baton Rouge water park and assorted promotional materials provided by WLOX.

The *South Mississippi Nurse of the Year* competition was developed by WLOX-TV. Nominations were accepted between July 1 and August 1, 2005. Thirteen finalists were picked from the 189 web nominations received. WLOX employees comprised the panel of judges. Imperial Palace’s sponsorship included advertising placement on WLOX television and a WLOX.com advertising component. The competition was a web promotion supported by an air schedule.

Necaise, 45, resides in Ocean Springs, Miss.

Dallas-based Trinity Hospice, the nation’s seventh largest hospice provider, offers palliative care and support services to terminally ill patients and their families. The company provides quality, comprehensive hospice care while remaining focused on meeting the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of terminally ill patients and their loved ones. Since its 1998 founding, Trinity has rapidly expanded through internal growth and acquisition. Today, the company operates from 26 locations across nine states. Please visit www.trinityhospice.com to learn more.

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